



MLA 2013 Docents, from the left: Evan Flanagan, Jason Lee (behind Evan), Gary Nasca (leaning forward), Setareh Alizadeh (behind Gary) Greg Philbrook (next to Setareh), and Morgan Hutchinson; all students come from The Creative Media & Digital Culture Program from Washington State University Vancouver

What We Learned from Working at “Avenues of Access” exhibit at the MLA 2013

From Gary (Senior, Intern at Intel): “By being a part of this experience, I learned a lot about what Electronic Literature is, why it is a significant contemporary literary form, and how it has grown over the years. Moreover, I learned a great deal about myself. After this experience, I’ve learned that I want to continue my education. . . . [T]he experience helped me realize that I would like to work toward a PhD and build a lifelong career in the field that incorporates Electronic Literature.”

From Greg (Graduating Senior, CMDC Tech and Research Assistant): “Even though I attended the MLA convention of 2012 in Seattle, the experience of Boston’s conference was quite different. A great deal of the visitors who attended the eLit exhibit in Boston were open to discussion on literature, and were genuinely interested in learning about electronic literature before they walked through our doors. The tactics we had to employ at this conference were unlike those needed in Seattle last year, and I thus learned how to curate in a different fashion. I learned a great deal about academic discussions of literature as well as the vast amount of eLit we had on display. It was a hands-on learning experience, and one that I am particularly grateful for.”

From Setareh (Graduating Senior, Diversity Intern): “Through [the MLA 2013 exhibit] I found a passion for sharing knowledge with others. This has led to another project—[Project Manager for the city wide read initiative, #nextchapter,] and becoming a Teachers Assistant for the Digital Technology and Culture 101 course in my following semester. I plan to carry out sharing my knowledge of electronic literature and digital technology as I work towards a Project Management position for future employment opportunities. I truly believe, through new experiences I learn the most about myself and those around me. I have learned a lot from being a docent at the Electronic Literature Exhibit and I am extremely grateful. “

From Jason (Junior, arsTechnologika Gallery Team): “I gained a new perspective on the literary importance of digital art. By studying different artist and learning what makes a piece locative, my understanding of electronic literature has tremendously grown. As an artist myself I have always had a deep appreciation for art, I just never imagined the various forms or avenues of access available until now. Being a docent at the MLA 2013 convention taught me how to work extremely efficient in a group setting and gave me the confidence to [take on] any future endeavor. Most of all I learned that I do possess the knowledge and skills able to help me succeed in life.”

From Evan (Junior, arsTechnologika Docent Team): “I learned that there is so much more out there than the place I call home. I'll always love the Northwest, but seeing Boston and the East Coast in general, seeing the diversity in people, the languages, the cultures that are interacting with each other was interesting and fascinating to me. . . . I grew up in this shell where I was trained to be overcautious and that the world was a scary, unforgiving place, but I now see that it is beautiful and I would love to see more, and experience more. If I were to take away one thing from this experience, it is that I am full of potential. I can be put into a place outside my comfort zone and thrive.”

From Morgan (Graduating Senior, arsTechnologika Gallery Manager): “The experience I had in Boston was invaluable; both to my personal growth, and my academic development. During our time spent being docents at the Electronic Literature exhibit, I had the opportunity to converse with professors and scholars from all over the United States, which presented me with the opportunity to absorb useful and beneficial knowledge that I may be able to utilize in the future. By engaging with individuals from many different areas of study and cultural backgrounds, I gained insight into topics and ideas that I would typically not have been exposed to had it not been for this trip. Overall, this experience has not only allowed me to realize that I am capable of mastering and learning from demanding (and at times, stressful) situations, but has also prepared me to evaluate what I want for my future in academia.”